

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully considered the Examiner's outstanding Office Action. A number of amendments to the Specification and the Abstract have been made responsive to the Office Action. As explained below, the pending claims are allowable.

Embodiments of the present invention make it possible to conveniently and cost effectively interact with a plurality of remote monitoring systems from a common location. Such monitoring systems can include for example, fire detection systems installed in a plurality of displaced locations.

A monitoring apparatus can be in communication and control one or more monitoring systems via a computer network. Representative computer networks include either the Internet or an intranet if available.

In accordance with the one embodiment of the invention, the monitoring apparatus can interact with an individual at a displaced monitoring system for purposes of carrying out a walk test. Software at the monitoring apparatus can present a walk test control graphical display for use by the operator.

In another system which embodies the invention, a plurality of monitoring apparatus can communicate via the computer network with each other, or, with various displaced monitoring systems. Groups of monitoring systems can be assigned to various of the monitoring apparatus to promote efficient control and communications.

Unlike the pending claims, Kimmel et al. U.S. Patent 6,972,676 is completely silent as to any test capabilities. As a result, none of claims 1, 3, 5, 7 and 28 are anticipated by Kimmel et al. Further, the disclosure of Naidoo et al. U.S. Patent 6,930,599 B2 does not address the deficiencies of Kimmel et al. Naidoo et al. is completely silent as to testing. Similarly, Foodman et al. is completely silent as to testing.

In rejecting claims 8 and 14 the Examiner relied on Kimmel et al. in view of Foodman et al. and further in view of Hess U.S. Patent 6,831,557. Unlike the claimed structures, Hess discloses and teaches a process of establishing service for a portable alarm system. Hess also

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Amendment A
Reply to Office Action mailed Feb. 22, 2006

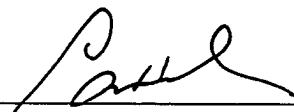
addresses a redundant system to ensure that once the alarm system places a call to a central monitoring system, that the call will be held in recent in the event that the first attempt does not result in a response or an answer. Hess does make a reference to "possible testing system" element 155 of Fig. 2 thereof but is not a specific either on that figure or elsewhere in the specification thereof as to the characteristics or parameters of such testing.

The prior art of record, alone or in combination is unlike various of the pending claims, for example see new claims 29-33. The prior art of record, for at least the above reasons fails to suggest, teach or make obvious the pending claims. Allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

Applicants also note that they have responded to the Examiner's objection by incorporating a Summary section hereby. However, it is believed that under the Patent Office Rules of Practice and the MPEP, the Summary section is optional and is not required. Patent applications are routinely issued without summaries. Examples include U.S. Patent Nos. 6,347,813 B1, 4,232,456 and 3,927,480. The enclosed Summary section is being added in response to the Examiner's objection, which it is believed is not well founded, and for purposes of cost effective prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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